

STATEMENT

on

the dissertation of **Nayden Vladislavov Todorov** on:

"THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS IN BULGARIA. HISTORY, CURRENT ISSUES AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS"

for the award of the scientific and educational degree "Doctor"
Department of Music - New Bulgarian University
Professional field 8.3 "Music and Dance Art"

Research field: Musicology and Music Art

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Nayden Todorov was born in 1974 in the city of Plovdiv, Bulgaria. He took his first piano lessons at the age of five and at 16 made his conducting debut. A great influence on his formation as a conductor were Alexander Vladigerov in Bulgaria and Professor Karl Österreich in Vienna. While still a student, he won prizes at national and international competitions, and in 1990 he founded his own youth orchestra, with which he performed a number of concerts in Bulgaria, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany for more than 10 years and also recorded several CDs. At that time he began to study conducting with the long-time chief conductor of Plovdiv Opera, Krastyu Marev, and then continued his studies in orchestral conducting with Professor Uros Leiwitz, choral conducting with Professor Günther Toering and opera conducting with Professor Konrad Leitner at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. During his studies he was a scholarship holder of the Borghese Foundation, the St. He was a Fellow of the St.

Cyril and Methodius Foundation, the Rotary Club of Vienna, the Rotary Club of Jerusalem and the George Wächter Foundation of Switzerland.

In 1995 he started his first permanent job as conductor of the Vratsa Symphony Orchestra, a few years later he was appointed chief conductor of the Vidin Symphony Orchestra.

In 1996, he was invited by the Israeli Leonard Bernstein Foundation to the Rubin Academy in Jerusalem, where he specialized under the conductor of the Israel Philharmonic, Mandy Rodan. At the same time, he played as a trumpet player in the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he had the opportunity to work with musicians such as David Chalón, Sergio Comissiona, Lorin Maazel, Krzysztof Penderecki and many others.

The meeting in 1996 in Los Angeles with the great composer Jerry Goldsmith opened for the young conductor the doors to a new world - film music. Since then, Nayden Todorov has regularly given concerts dedicated to this genre, and in the last decade alone he has performed in Munich annually symphonic music from some of the most celebrated soundtracks of our time.

In 1997 he founded the Thracian Summer Festival in his hometown. A year later, he received his first permanent international engagement, in Haifa, Israel, with the North Israeli Symphony Orchestra, where he was selected from among more than 150 applicants to become the orchestra's permanent conductor.

In the following years, Nayden Todorov appeared on the stages of many of the major cultural centres in Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

In 2000, he was invited to become the Music Director of the Plovdiv Opera and Philharmonic Orchestra, becoming the youngest conductor in Bulgaria to hold such a position. His operatic debut at the Plovdiv Opera House in early 2001 was the premiere of Puccini's *Tosca*. With the Plovdiv Philharmonic Orchestra he recorded the symphonies of Louis Glass for the Danish company Danacord, as well as over 100 CDs for the American company MMO. At the summer festival in the Ancient Theatre he conducts concerts and

performances of the Opera of Plovdiv, featuring prominent Bulgarian and international singers.

In 2001, after several years of joint projects for the American record company IMO, Nayden Todorov appeared for the first time on stage with the Sofia Opera Orchestra, in a concert of the first master class of the great Bulgarian diva Raina Kabaivanska.

Nayden Todorov's operatic debut in Sofia Opera was in 2002 with Verdi's *La Traviata*. Again in Sofia Opera was his ballet debut in 2003, with Sergei Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*.

With the Sofia Opera, Nayden Todorov recorded for the Naxos company the ballet *Don Quixote* by Ludwig Minkus, as well as Rachmaninov's operas *Aleko*, *The Knight-Equerry* and *Francesca da Rimini*. In 2006 he also staged his first joint production with Swiss director Gian Giannotti on the stage of the Sofia Opera House - Rossini's opera *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, marking the beginning of a long and fruitful creative relationship.

Nayden Todorov first established a relationship with Grandopera Wichita in 2005, a company with which he has realised various productions over the years - Verdi's *Aida*, Puccini's *Tosca*, Rossini's *Wilhelm Tell*.

In the period 2005-2017 Nayden Todorov was director of the State Opera in Ruse, with which he participated at numerous prestigious forums in various countries throughout Europe.

For his work and activities with the Ruse Opera, Nayden Todorov has received various awards, including several Crystal Lyres, Golden Book, Emil Chakarov, Musician of the Year, and in 2016 was awarded the title of Honorary Citizen of the City of Ruse.

In 2006, the talented conductor made his debut with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and only a year later was invited to conduct the concerts of the ensemble's tour in the largest cities of Japan.

In 2009 he gave his first concert at the Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow with the Yaroslav Philharmonic Orchestra, and in 2010 he made his debut at the Wiener Volksoper,

conducting performances of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker* with the State Ballet of Vienna.

In 2013, Nayden Todorov graduated as a cultural manager at New Bulgarian University, where in recent years he has been invited to lecture. In 2019 he is also the chairman of the prestigious jury of Gheena Dimitrova Singing Competition, with members Alexandrina Milcheva, Darina Takova, Kaludi Kaludov and Adrian Holender.

He has also participated in a number of international crossover projects, including a series of concerts with Deep Purple's keyboardist John Lord, as well as special projects with American pop singer Anastasia, Rainbow's Dougie White and concerts with stars from the world of musical theatre such as Anna-Maria Kaufman, Steve Balsamo, Cassia Lascaux and many others.

In 2004 he was named resident guest conductor of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, and later became Principal Guest Conductor, and in early 2017 was appointed its Director.

In 2005 Nayden Todorov received his first Crystal Lyre for his performance of Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony with the Sofia Philharmonic. In the same year he made a new recording of the National Bulgarian Anthem, with soloists Raina Kabaivanska, Nikola Ghyuselev, Roberta and Orlin Goranov.

For the promotion of Bulgarian music with the same orchestra he received the Golden Staff (Petolinie) Award of the Union of Bulgarian Composers, and later the Golden Book Award, the Plaque of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria and many others.

In 2008, together with the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and soloists Svetlin Rusev, Lyudmil Angelov and Borislav Yotsov, Nayden Todorov made his debut at the UNESCO Hall in Paris.

In 2009, again with the Sofia Philharmonic, he made his debut in Moscow, at the Bolshoi Theatre. In 2018, as part of the educational policy of the Sofia Philharmonic, Nayden Todorov became the host of the classical music programme of the Bulgarian National Television - "In Concert with BNT2".

At the beginning of 2018, he also conducted the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra at the opening concert of the Bulgarian Presidency of the European Council at the world-famous BOSAR Hall in Brussels.

In 2019, Disney organised the first major presentation of Star Wars in a Concert in major cities in China, with the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Nayden Todorov.

In 2020, he was awarded the Bogdan Bogdanov Prize for Humanities, on 1 November 2021 - again the Crystal Lyra Prize, and in September 2022 - the Culture Prize of Sofia Municipality. A passionate fan of the fantasy genre and an avid gamer, in 2021 Nayden Todorov published the book "A Breeze of Angels. Stories". Memorable for Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and Nayden Todorov were the concerts in the "Golden Hall" of the Musikverein in Vienna on 17 May 2022, in Lisinski Hall.

On October 22, 2023 - they were guests of the State Symphony Orchestra of Thessaloniki. In October 2022, Nayden Todorov was re-elected director of the Sofia Philharmonic.

In the period February-June 2023 he was interim Minister of Culture and held the same post again from April 2024.

The thesis consists of an Introduction, Four Main Chapters, Summaries, Recommendations to subject of research, Contributions, Publications, Bibliography and Appendices. 258 pages with 36 pages of appendices.

Relevance of the topic - no history of symphony orchestras has been proposed in Bulgaria so far. There are works about opera theatres, composers - as authors and creators of music, but there is a lack of specialised literature and scholarly research on the history and development of symphony orchestras. For 30 years there has been insufficient information - in terms of facts and sources - archival documents have been destroyed or are unavailable for scholarly and research purposes. On the other hand, in recent years a number of attempts have been made to reform the sector without prior analysis of the factors influencing the performance of symphony orchestras in Bulgaria. Various models have not been applied to establish the importance of strategy as an influencing factor on the

performance of symphony orchestras and to assess which form of management is most appropriate for Bulgaria. These arguments, combined with personal necessity and interest, are the reasons for directing the development of the present dissertation.

The object of the research is the history and current state of Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra as well as the history of orchestral practice in Bulgaria. All this is refracted through the prism of the world's best practices.

The research focuses on the methodological and applied aspects of uncovering opportunities in order to improve the work products of musicians, orchestra players, managers, soloists and group leaders by increasing their motivational and emotional commitment to the institution of which they are an integral harmonic part.

The aim of this dissertation is to illuminate the history and hence establish the current situation of symphony orchestras in Bulgaria, focusing primarily on the state of Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra. To borrow some innovative aspects and organisational practices of the best European and world philharmonic structures and to try to implement them in the Bulgarian musical cultural environment in order to bring about organisational change by improving the management of symphony orchestras.

The achievement of the objective thus formulated brings out the **following tasks** for implementation :

1. To establish a theoretical basis for the structure and management of symphony orchestras.
2. To provide historical insight into the origin and development of orchestral art in Bulgaria.
3. To examine analytically the state of orchestras and the development of musical (symphonic) institutions in Bulgaria.
4. To consider critically the cultural reforms of the musical and performing arts in Bulgaria.
5. To present and analyse the structure and management of Sofia Philharmonic (as of 1 January 2020).

6. To appropiate the strategy model as an influencing factor on the importance of symphony orchestras' performance results to be part of the cultural industry and to have a public-social activity.
7. To analyse the legislative framework for performing arts management in Bulgaria.
8. To present integrated criteria for the evaluation of the symphony orchestra in the country, from which to derive ways of its financing.

Research purport of the dissertation

An orchestral musician or soloist achieves three types of outcomes (musical, economic and socio-cultural) as he or she performs in an organisation where results are also measured in these three areas. Organisational strategy is a major influencing factor on the performance outcomes of symphony orchestras in order to be part of the cultural industry and to have a public social activity. Despite the multifaceted and complex nature of the work of a philharmonic musician, it is subject to management, and its results can be significantly improved through the application of appropriate methodological tools for training and for developing its capabilities for individual, and therefore organisational, change.

Approach and methodology of the dissertation

Historical analysis and synthesis methods, comparative method, opinion and evaluation research, social experiment, etc. are used for the accomplishment of the research. The approach is analytical - facts about orchestras in Bulgaria and abroad are studied and collected. The methods are of comparison and historiographic grounding of the collected overall information. Futuristic elements have been applied to assess the possibilities for the development of the sector, according to the current globalisation of the social environment and especially since Bulgaria is part of the common European cultural space.

Sources of information used are: documents related to legislative initiatives - laws and decrees; State Gazette; Electronic sources and information from websites of world and European orchestras (BNR Symphony Orchestra; ORF Vienna; RAI; SWR; Vienna Opera;

Metropolitan; Marinsky Theatre; Milanska Scala; European Union Youth Orchestra; Orchestra Simón Bolívar, etc.).); Official records published by the Ministry of Culture; Culture Committee; State Archives; Almanacs and Encyclopaedias; Books and Journals detailed in the Bibliography and Siteography section; Doctoral student's personal archive, etc.

Questions and limits in the dissertation research

The limitations assumed in the research have their justification, namely: the priority in the research of the internal factors influencing the quantitative and qualitative characterisation of the work carried out by the philharmonic instrumentalist has been derived; the study of the factors of the external environment is based on diagnostic analysis, expert assessments and statistical data. The scope of symphony orchestras under study is narrowed to 20, according to the access to public information about them. This narrows the scope of the present study.

Scope and Structure of the Dissertation

Firstly, research and analysis of contemporary, up-to-date literature sources and summary of essential theoretical issues related to the existing theoretical formulations of the symphony orchestra problem, i.e. the nature of the orchestra and types, according to the composition, according to the act of establishment, according to the operational goals. Secondly, the development and adaptation of methodological and methodological provisions for the evaluation and analysis of influencing factors on the performance of symphony orchestras in Bulgaria. The stages of development of musical (symphonic) institutions in Bulgaria and the process of cultural reforms in musical and performing arts in the country are examined. Thirdly, the next chapter of the dissertation is a practical study aimed at the implementation of the methodology. A model of the importance of strategy as an influencing factor on the performance of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra is tested. A historical overview of the organisation; the state of its management structure as of January 2020; a Development Strategy for the Philharmonic for the period 2018-2021; and an illustration of the institution's concert planning and implementation are presented. Fourthly, ideas for implementing organisational change by improving the management of the symphony orchestra through the establishment of institutional policy in the direction of

cultural industry or public and social activities are presented, as well as some key aspects influencing the choice of management policy. Integral criteria for evaluating symphony orchestra employees are proposed.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DISSERTATION

Contributions of a cultural and managerial nature

1. It is reasoned that the work of a musician in an orchestra has a dual character - on one hand he is a personal resource and at the same time he is a capital of the organisation that is interested in developing him. The orchestra member or soloist achieves three types of results (musical, economic and socio-cultural) as he carries out his activities in an organisation where the results are also measured in these three areas.

2. A number of integrated criteria for the evaluation of human resources in the symphony orchestra in our country have been systematised, from which the ways of its financing and management as part of the cultural industry with socio-social activities can be derived.

3. It is justified and proven that, despite the multifaceted and complex nature of the work of symphony musicians, it is subject to management; its results can be significantly improved through the application of appropriate methodological tools for training and for developing the capabilities of the symphony orchestra for individual, and therefore organisational change.

Contributions of an applied nature

4. The development of the symphony orchestra from the Liberation to present day as part of the performing arts is presented historiographically. The line drawn in the dissertation is supported by evidence and possible subsequent paths for its growth as a musical and social instrument are shown, using the experience of various professionals in the field, but also that of the national orchestra of Bulgaria - the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra.

5. A critical analysis of the cultural reforms in the performing arts in Bulgaria. A legislative framework for the management of the performing arts in Bulgaria is defined.

6. A model of the strategy of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra (National Symphony Orchestra) and its significance as a factor influencing the performance of symphony orchestras as a whole and as part of the cultural industry of the country (in this case the Republic of Bulgaria) and the region in Europe and the European Community (possible future influences in the expansion of the philosophy and practice of the cultural activities of the institution) has been proposed and tested. This large-scale and important activity has a social and educational character and could be an example for similar orchestras, based on the overall work of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra.

7. The conclusions drawn, the array of information presented, even the examples and practices given, the data and interviews suggested in the appendices, can be the basis for further scientific and applied research in the field of orchestral work and management.

The conclusion of the dissertation contains two sets of issues: in the first place, a justification of the accomplishment of the overall research tasks and the achievement of the main objective as well as evidence for the confirmation of the research (doctoral) thesis; in the second place, a derivation, including the necessary argumentation, of directions for future work and research in the field of symphony orchestra management for the implementation of organisational change by improving the management of the organisational structure. A summary and recommendations to the object of study are included.

From my position as a conductor with 40 years of professional experience on stage, I am impressed by the candidate's dissertation, not only by all the information he has synthesised and arranged, but also by the innovative ideas and suggestions he offers. I look to the future with optimism and hope that this work will be read by a significant number of people engaged in this "mission" and serve as a guide to their work.

I confidently recommend to the scientific jury to award Nayden Vladislavov Todorov with the scientific-educational degree "Doctor".

10. 09. 2024 г. Professor Dr. DEYAN EVGENIEV PAVLOV